

CLAIMS:

1. A video communication system (10) comprising:
a mobile communication network (20,30);
a mobile communication device (60) including a display (61) that is capable of exchanging information with another communication device via the mobile communication network; and
a database (80) including a plurality of avatars (70), the database being a global resource for the mobile communication network,
wherein the mobile communication device can access at least one of the plurality of avatars.
2. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein mobile communication network is a cellular network including a plurality of mobile stations (20) and at least one base station (30).
3. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 2, wherein the mobile communication device is a cellular telephone (60).
4. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one three-dimensional representation of a human head.
5. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one two-dimensional representation of a human head (70).
6. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one image-based representation of a human head (70).
7. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein the mobile communication device (60) further includes a video input interface.

8. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 1, wherein the database (80) is part of a video service node (50) that is communicatively connected to the mobile communication network.

9. The video communication system (10) according to Claim 8, wherein the video service node (50) further includes animation-synthesis software to allow a subscriber of the video communication system to create a customized avatar.

10. A method (Fig. 2) for using an avatar for mobile video communication, the method comprising the steps of:

initiating a video communication by a mobile communication device user to another video communication device user;
accessing a global resource database including a plurality of avatars;
selecting one avatar of the plurality of avatars in the database; and
sending the one avatar to the another video communication device user.

11. The method according to Claim 10, wherein the mobile communication device is a cellular telephone.

12. The method according to Claim 10, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one three-dimensional representation of a human head

13. The method according to Claim 10, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one two-dimensional representation of a human head

14. The method according to Claim 10, wherein the plurality of avatars include at least one image-based representation of a human head.

15. The method according to Claim 10, further comprising the step of allowing mobile communication device user to create a customized avatar by providing video information.

16. The method according to Claim 10, wherein the selection step includes using a predetermined default avatar.

17. The method according to Claim 16, wherein at least two different predetermined default avatars are used with two video communication device user to be called.

18. The method according to Claim 10, further comprising the step of sending a predetermined avatar to the mobile communication device user.